

## **Testimony**

### **Submitted to the Appropriations Committee**

**February 21, 2017**

Good afternoon members of the Appropriations Committee. My name is Dr. Alan Addley and I am the Superintendent of the Granby Public Schools. I also serve as the President of the Connecticut Association of Public School Superintendents. I wish to address educational and municipal funding in the Governor's Budget, The Open Choice Academic Support Grant and speak to the impact that the proposed reductions by the Governor will have on the children in the Granby Public Schools and for that matter many other school systems.

For Granby, the Governor's Budget could result in a reduction of \$1.5M in ECS funds and an additional mandate to pay \$1.5 million in teacher retirement contributions, annually for two years. This reduction in funding is in addition to the annual loss of revenue of \$115K in the Open Choice Support Grant.

Granby's \$1.5M contribution to the state's unfunded teacher retirement liability next year alone would increase the mill rate by 7.71%. For those in the administration that would suggest this has no impact to taxpayers, it would increase Granby's mill rate from 36.94 to 39.7.

Each year, as permitted by the Governor's proposed Budget, if the town passes along the entire reduction of \$1.5M in ECS funds to the Board of Education, it would have devastating implications for Granby's school system. For next year alone the impact of this type of reduction could potentially, simultaneously, eliminate the district's K-12 music program, world language program and entire athletic program. Alternatively, it could reduce approximately 25 teachers resulting in a catastrophic impact on teaching and learning. I dread to contemplate two successive years of such reductions.

Finally, it makes no sense to reallocate wealth to the cities while at the same dismantling the surrounding school districts. I acknowledge the State's financial mess and dilemma; however, let us not compound the problem by passing along the burden of the State's mismanagement onto the municipalities. It is imperative to revisit the Governor's funding model to towns and schools and if the state is serious about addressing the Sheff settlement and resolving this constitutional, moral and equity issue, then it must take the responsibility for fully funding this effort by reinstating the Open Choice Support Grant. Thank you for your time.